

INFORMATION REPORT INFORMATION REPORT

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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1. The chief problem facing the animal husbandry industry in East Germany is that of feed. The chief shortages are in feed containing albumen: straw, hay, and barley meal (Gerstenschnitz); but there is also not enough coarse fodder (Rauhfutter). The cause of the shortages is to be found less in organizational failures than in the entirely insufficient nutrition provided for the soil. Of the fertilizers required, 60 percent of the nitrogen needed, 60 percent of the potash and as much as 80 percent of the phosphorus are not being provided.
2. The same situation existed in 1953, even though the chemical plants producing these fertilizers - the Leuna and Piesteritz plants - are located in the Halle area of Sachsen-Anhalt, where the shortage of the fertilizers was observed. The product of these plants, however, is actually sent to the USSR instead of being used in East Germany. The return of the Leunawerke to the East German economy did not bring about any improvement. Instead, the nitrogen allocations available in 1954 were reduced again by 20 percent.
3. Another factor affecting the situation was the adoption of the Soviet practice of threshing the grain in the summer, so that the care of the stubble (Stoppelpflege) suffered. The result was that the necessary bacteria cultures were insufficiently developed and the fields ran to weeds. The early termination of the threshing is officially justified on the basis of "planned economy": the State has to have a survey of the year's harvest at the earliest possible moment; in addition, there is a danger that if the threshing is not done early, the farmers will use the grain for fodder in large amounts. The lack of confidence of the State leadership in the farmers, thus, is one of the main reasons for this inexpedient requirement. Artificial methods for increasing the yield which have been brought in from the USSR (Jarovization), and methods of eliminating weeds (the nest-

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4. The situation is further aggravated by the fact that the fertilizers on hand, too little in any event, are ~~allocated~~ preference to the LPGs for political reasons. The LPGs have poor soil, they are poorly subdivided (parzelliert), and the farmers working on them are inexperienced or incompetent. The service given by the MTSs is also insufficient. Usually, only 60 or 70 percent of the machines are in working order. Especially the new machines and the Soviet-made tractors get out of order frequently, and the old Lanz "Bulldogs" are still the most reliable.
5. The problems resulting from the feed shortages and the lack of experience of the farmers on the LPGs resulted in the epidemic of cattle jaundice throughout Sachsen-Anhalt in 1954. The cattle were fed a diet consisting almost exclusively of turnip leaves (Ruebenblattfuetterung), because that was all that was available. The LPG farmers had no idea of what would result from such a practice.
6. Animal husbandry suffers the most in this situation, because agriculture is unable to provide food for the population and fodder for the animals in sufficient amounts at the same time. Planning Instruktore were sent to the LPGs of the Altmark which is the center of East German animal husbandry. They learned that as a result of the lack of hay and Kraftfutter the majority of the animals in the Altmark were half starved in the winter of 1954-1955. When there are stocks of hay above the plan, they are priced extremely high - a double-hundred-weight of hay sells for 60 DME.
7. The experiments of the University of Halle under Professor Arno Columbus, the head of the Institute for Animal Nutrition (Tierernaehrung), are attempting to find substitute feed products, especially those which will replace feeds containing albumen. In feed for pigs, good success was achieved by adding ensilage (Gruenfutter) to coarse-ground feed (Schrotmast) and also to potato feed (Kartoffelmast). They also succeeded in raising young hens quicker and with better egg-laying qualities by adding alfalfa (Luzerne) and clover to their feed instead of the usual fish meal (Fischmehl). Experiments attempting to force the fattening of sows by hormonal castration (actually sterilization) failed, however. Other, successful, experiments dealt with the substitution of sugar wet pulp (Zuckernass-Schnitzel) for barley meal. These experiments were carried out without prior coordination with East German government offices or the Academy of Agriculture.
8. The entire faculty of the agricultural school of the University of Halle, including the SED members, is in favor of continuing this autonomy of the agricultural school, and, if the efforts to exert control over its work by the East German government should succeed, it is believed that a number of professors, including Arno Columbus, would leave the University.

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